

I think all the work had been done; the foundation had been laid for the filling of the Northwest with settlers by the administration that preceded the present one, and the matter had been made very much easier for the present administration from the fact that just about that time all Canadians began to believe in their country. My hon. friend said that Canadians believed in their country. Well, it seems to me, that a very large proportion of them only began to believe in their country about the time their party came into power. During the whole of the time the present opposition were in power, the then opposition were almost unanimous in decrying the country.

Hon. Mr. TEMPLEMAN—No, no.

Hon. Mr. FERGUSON—My hon. friend must think we have very short memories. We have a distinct recollection of the course that they pursued at that time. Canada was represented as a country perfectly helpless in itself and our only salvation from poverty and all other evils was the opening of the American market to us. That was the policy they pursued; they said there was no future for Canada unless unrestricted reciprocity with the United States could be attained. It was a very great point for the present government when they came into power, and immediately became faithful to their country to a certain extent, that they had this advantage that the whole Liberal-Conservative party from one end of the country to the other remained true to the Dominion, and were never found to utter one pessimistic word with regard to Canada although they were in opposition. When the government put forward any efforts to bring immigration to the country they did not hear the opposition say that Canada was going to the dogs because we could not get reciprocity with the United States. On the contrary, the opposition added their tribute to that of the government and their friends that the country was prosperous and offered an excellent home for immigrants.

Another reference was made by my hon. friend in moving the address, to the conduct of Sir Wilfrid Laurier and the important service which he rendered in the Jubilee celebration as leading up to the development of British trade and our receiving immigration from the mother country. I suppose that

was the connection in which he brought in that remark about the services rendered by Sir Wilfrid Laurier during the Jubilee year in Great Britain. I may have something to say a little later in regard to that question of preferential trade, but I want to put in this remark as I pass, that if the Premier of Canada had, during the Jubilee year in Great Britain carried out the promises he had made to the electors of Canada before he went to England to the effect that he would, if he got into power, make strenuous efforts to obtain a preference for the products of our farmers and other producers in the British market—had he put in a plea of that kind when he was there, I might be disposed to admit that he was entitled to some degree of credit on account of any development which has occurred in the British trade since that time. But my hon. friend must remember that when the Premier went to England he stated publicly that we did not want any preference for our products in the British market, and if a friendly feeling for Canada has been developed, and a market found for our products there since that time, I think it would be very far-fetched indeed to connect anything which the Prime Minister did when he was there in 1897 with that result. When we look over the entire situation, we cannot forget that the changes which were made in the tariff in 1897 by the present government were not very many or very important, and that wherever they did make changes they were detrimental to the manufacturing interests of Canada in almost every respect. A better instance cannot be referred to than the iron and steel industry. That industry is at the present time in a languishing condition, I will not say entirely due to lack of protection, although that is one strong reason, but the bounty system which the government took up as their method has been proved by experience to be a mistaken policy. It was a mistake to reduce the iron duties, and if the government does not rectify that mistake, the duty will be entrusted to some other government and not only in that matter but others as well. You cannot point to one manufacturing industry that has been bettered by the policy of this government. You cannot look to one single market that has been obtained for the products of the farm